



# TRANSPORTATION

## RAIL TRANSIT SAFETY

The CPUC has safety and security regulatory authority over all rail transit agencies (RTAs) in California and works in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the RTAs to enhance public safety and security. The CPUC verifies the System Safety and Security Plans of each RTA to ensure that these plans meet all state and federal rules and regulations.

The CPUC prescribes safety and security requirements for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of heavy rail transit, light-rail transit, trolleys, and funicular systems. The CPUC ensures that all rail transit system extensions and new construction projects undergo a safety certification review and approval.

The CPUC regulates safety and security of the following 12 transit agencies:

1. Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART);
2. San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA);
3. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA);
4. Sacramento Regional Transit District (SRTD);
5. San Diego Trolley Inc. (SDTI);
6. Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (SCVTA);
7. San Francisco International Airport (AirTrain) connection to BART;
8. North County Transit District (NCTD) (Sprinter);
9. Angel's Flight Railway Company, funicular system in Los Angeles;
10. San Pedro Red Cars (POLA);
11. Los Angeles Farmer's Market trolley located at the Grove and Americana on Brand trolley, located in Glendale; and,
12. Sacramento Airport Automated People Mover System (commenced service in 2011).

## Comprehensive Triennial Audits

In 2011, the CPUC conducted Triennial Reviews, including both safety and security components, of Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, Sacramento Regional Transit District, and Angel's Flight Railway, and approved audit reports for AirTrain, BART, NCTD, SDTI, LACMTA, POLA, and SCVTA to ensure that audit recommendations are addressed through corrective action plans, monitoring, and inspection.

## Safety and Security Certification

The CPUC verifies the safety and security certification of new transit projects and extensions and works closely with FTA personnel on federally funded projects. Over the past few years, rail transit system extensions have been successfully pursued by the RTAs, resulting in several new projects. The CPUC provides regulatory oversight of the SFMTA Central Subway Project, the SDTI Mid-Coast Corridor Transit Project, LACMTA EXPO Lines Phase 1 and 2, LACMTA Foothill Extension Project, LACMTA Crenshaw Corridor Project, LACMTA Regional Connector project, BART/VTA Warm Springs project, BART Oakland airport extension, eBART extension, SRTD extension, and SDTI Blue Line extension.

During 2011, the CPUC also approved Safety and Security Certification Plans for the SDTI vintage trolley restoration, and SDTI new light rail vehicle procurement projects. Due to the expansion of these RTA systems, the CPUC expects to review and consider several safety certifications in the near future relating to these and other upcoming projects.

## ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS

As of mid-November 2011, 144 rail transit accidents were reported to the CPUC. Seven fatalities occurred on RTA properties in 2011. Depending upon the circumstances of the accident, CPUC staff either directly investigates or participates in accident investigations conducted

by RTAs and reviews and approves RTA accident investigation reports.

When circumstances suggest a multiagency investigation is appropriate, CPUC staff participates in accident investigation task forces with members from all railroads and transit agencies, the FRA, Caltrans, local roadway authorities, and local law enforcement representatives. The CPUC continues to develop and enhance its internal investigation procedures, policies, and processes through training and participation with other investigative agencies such as the National Transportation Safety Board. The CPUC ensures all accident investigation recommendations are addressed by the RTAs with corrective action plans and by monitoring implementation.

### Rail Transit Safety Inspection Program

The CPUC established a safety inspection program in 2009 with staff investigators that specialize in operations, equipment, track, and signal and train control. The inspection program is unique among State Safety Oversight Agencies in the U.S., as it allows the CPUC to examine RTA infrastructure and operations on the ground to ensure that safety plans and corrective action plans are actually implemented to meet industry standards. The inspection team performed 93 separate inspections, including a three-day joint track inspection in a rail corridor shared with freight operations.

### Complaints

In 2011, CPUC staff investigated five complaints regarding rail transit systems. Three complaints are still under investigation and two have been resolved. The CPUC continues to work a complaint filed by the Pasadena Avenue Monterey Road Committee regarding noise impacts along the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Gold Line.

### CPUC Leads Industry with Ban on Use of Personal Electronic Devices By Rail Transit Operators

On October 6, 2011, the CPUC adopted a first-of-its-kind regulation enforcing prohibitions against the use of personal electronic devices, such as cell phones, by rail transit system operators. This is the first regulation issued in the U.S. that limits the use of personal electronic devices and requires monitoring by rail transit agencies. This regulation was the culmination of a CPUC staff investigation of a September 2008 multiple-fatality Metrolink and Union Pacific Railroad collision in which personal cell

phone use is thought to be a primary or contributing cause of the accident.

### Roadway Worker Protections

In response to two transit agency roadway worker fatalities in 2008, the CPUC is evaluating whether current roadway worker protection rules for transit agency personnel are adequate. The CPUC completed a draft set of rules in 2010, and in 2011 held additional meetings and refined the rules. The CPUC expects a final decision on the matter in the first part of 2012.

### Investigation into the Facilities and Practices of SFMTA

In February 2011, the CPUC opened a formal investigation into the facilities and practices of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA). CPUC staff identified repeated safety violations and areas in SFMTA's light rail systems that require safety improvements. In addition to specific alleged safety violations and recommendations, CPUC staff observed a lack of responsiveness by SFMTA to CPUC findings and recommendations. Of particular concern was SFMTA's inadequate and delayed responses to staff's incident reports, investigations, and corrective action recommendations. Through investigation, the CPUC seeks to address alleged past violations that may have resulted in unsafe operations and endangered SFMTA's passengers and employees. The proceeding will conclude in 2012.

## RAIL CROSSING SAFETY

The CPUC oversees the safety of railroad crossings in California and evaluates and approves their design, location, terms of installation, operation, maintenance, use, and warning devices. The CPUC currently has safety oversight responsibility for approximately 13,250 crossings, of which 10,000 are at-grade (the rail and road are at the same level). The CPUC's responsibilities include:

- Performing safety inspections of crossings;
- Enhancing and improving safety at all crossings in the state;
- Analyzing new crossing safety technology.
- Reviewing and processing applications for CPUC authorization to construct new or to alter existing crossings;
- Reviewing and responding to public complaints (e.g., rough or unsafe crossings, noise issues, etc.);